

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

Claim 1. (original) A method for producing a colorant comprising:

contacting a dispersion of a powdery coloring matter substance in deionized water with an anion exchange resin and/or a cation exchange resin to subject the dispersion to ion exchanging until an electrical conductivity of the dispersion reaches 25  $\mu\text{S}/\text{cm}$  or lower, thereby obtaining a purified coloring matter substance;

contacting with an anion exchange resin and/or a cation exchange resin an aqueous solution or organic solvent solution of a binder resin prepared so that a carboxyl group concentration or a sum of a carboxyl group concentration and a hydroxyl group concentration is 0.001 mol/ml or higher, to obtain a purified binder resin solution;

kneading the purified coloring matter substance and the purified binder resin solution to obtain a colorant precursor; and

contacting the colorant precursor with an anion exchange resin and/or a cation exchange resin.

Claim 2. (original) The method according to claim 1, further comprising:

subjecting the liquid colorant precursor to an ultra-high speed centrifugal separation at 5000-15000 rpm after the contacting with the anion exchange resin and/or the cation exchange resin.

Claim 3. (previously presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein the binder resin is a copolymer of at least one polymerizable monomer containing a carboxyl group and at least one polymerizable monomer containing neither carboxyl group nor hydroxyl group, a copolymer of at least one polymerizable monomer containing a carboxyl group, at least one polymerizable monomer containing a hydroxyl group and at least one polymerizable monomer containing neither carboxyl group nor hydroxyl group, or a mixture thereof.

Claim 4. (previously presented) A colorant obtained by a method according to claim 1, wherein the colorant has a molecular extinction coefficient that increases in proportion to a polar group concentration (mol/ml).

Claim 5. (cancelled) The purified coloring matter substance obtained in the method according to claim 1, wherein the coloring matter has an electrical conductivity of up to 25  $\mu\text{S/cm}$ .

Claim 6. (previously presented) The purified binder resin solution obtained in the method according to claim 1, wherein the purified binder resin solution has a carboxyl group concentration or a sum of a carboxyl group concentration and a hydroxyl group concentration to be 0.001 mol/ml or higher.

Claim 7. (previously presented) The colorant precursor obtained in the method according to in claim 1, wherein the colorant precursor has a viscosity of 30 cps to 45 cps.

Claim 8. (previously presented) The colorant of claim 4, wherein the polar group is selected from the group consisting of acid group and hydroxyl group.

Claim 9. (previously presented) A colorant obtained by a method according to claim 1, wherein the colorant has a heating residue of about 40% to 65%.

Claim 10. (cancelled) The purified coloring matter substance obtained in the method according to claim 1, wherein the coloring matter has a molecular extinction coefficient  $\epsilon_{\text{max}}$  of 1100 to 32300.

Claim 11. (previously presented) The colorant precursor obtained in the method according to in claim 2, wherein the colorant precursor has a viscosity of 25 cps to 40 cps.